

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEETING NOTES

March 6, 1997, 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OFFICES
PORTLAND, OREGON

I. Greeting and Introductions.

The March 6 meeting of the Implementation Team, held at the National Marine Fisheries Service's offices in Portland, Oregon, was co-chaired by Donna Darm and Brian Brown of NMFS. The agenda for the March 6 meeting and a list of attendees are attached as Enclosures A and B. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced in the body of the text may be too lengthy to attach; all enclosures referenced are available upon request from Kathy Mott at 503/230-5420 or via email at Kathy.Mott@noaa.gov.

II. Presentation of 1997 Migration Plan Recommended by Idaho Rivers United et al.

Charles Ray of Idaho Rivers United distributed Enclosure C, a document titled "1997 Salmon and Steelhead Migration Operating Plan for the Snake and Columbia Rivers and Federal Dams." Ray spent several minutes going through this proposal, explaining that it represents the views of IRU, American Rivers, the Boulder-White Clouds Council, Friends of the Earth, the Idaho Conservation League, the Institute for Fisheries Resources, the Natural Resource Defense Council, the Northwest Environmental Defense Center, the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, the Oregon Natural Desert Association, the Oregon Natural Resources Council, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, the Sawtooth Wildlife Council and the Sierra Club, plus six other organizations -- in all, environmental and tribal groups representing about 2 million citizens.

These 20 groups have put together our idea of what a 1997 migration should look like, with elements that are doable right

now, Ray began. The major elements of this proposed plan include:

? A 1997 migration operating plan which resolves issues surrounding overgeneration spill, percentage of fish transported vs. the percentage left in-river, gas abatement, flow augmentation, and prioritizing in-river conditions over research protocols.

? Flow targets. The plan asks that the Biological Opinion flow targets be met on a daily basis, as a minimum flow -- not as a cap.

? Flow augmentation. The plan asks that the flow augmentation volumes provided out of Idaho in 1994 -- 2.6 MAF -- be the minimum provided in 1997.

? Spill. The plan specifies that all projects be operated throughout the migration season, regardless of flow, to achieve 80% FPE.

? TDG. We ask that NMFS request that the variance amounts be increased by 5% this year, said Ray -- two years of monitoring have shown us that higher TDG levels are not that detrimental to fish. With a 5% increase in the variance, we can come much closer to achieving 80% FPE.

? Transportation. The IRU plan calls for 0% transportation in 1997. After experimenting with transportation for 25 years, it's time to try an experiment with no transportation in 1997, said Ray.

? Temperature. The IRU plan calls for a temperature ceiling of 68 degrees F throughout the system, throughout the migration season.

? Unit Outages. We ask that the Corps finally get all of its equipment on-line, for once, said Ray.

? John Day Operations. We expect John Day to be operated at minimum operating pool in 1997, just as we expected it to be operated at MOP in 1996, said Ray.

I have a big problem with the fact that here we are, a month before the beginning of the migration season, and many of the big issues are still not resolved -- they're not even placed in the proper forum, said Ray. There is no more time for delay. We have a month to get these issues resolved before the migration season begins. But the policy, the protocol and the direction needs to come from the top, not be elevated up from the bottom in an endless shell game that results in a migration season that gets underway with the region having no firm plan in mind.

Ray suggested the following items on today's IT agenda as issues that need to be resolved without delay:

- 1997 operations
- The need for another IT meeting in March
- The need to schedule an Executive Committee meeting prior to the start of the migration season.

Ray drew the IT's attention to the list, prepared by Brian Brown of NMFS and attached to the

agenda to today's meeting (Enclosure A) of possible future agenda items, items dropped from consideration for 1997, items being addressed under the Alternative Dispute Resolution process, items already addressed by NMFS, issues resolved and issues whose status is unknown.

Under "possible future agenda items," said Ray, the Idaho Strategy, gas abatement studies and gas management need to be decided in this room, today.

I was appalled at the list of "items dropped from consideration for 1997," Ray continued. Lower Granite at elevation 710 is a major element of our proposal, and is supported by the tribes; there is no reason whatsoever why that can't be done this year, he said. John Day at MOP is a reasonable and prudent alternative, called for in the Biological Opinion to avoid jeopardy. Every day there are fish migrating through the system while John Day is not at MOP, by NMFS's own admission, we're operating in a jeopardy situation. There's no reason that can't be done, said Ray, except for Corps of Engineers recalcitrance. This decision has to be revisited.

Later in the meeting, the discussion returned to the question of John Day at MOP, and whether or not the IT has formally dropped it from consideration in 1997. That issue was dropped at the IT's February 13 meeting, primarily because NMFS said it was not an option for 1997, said Brown. It wasn't so much a case where everyone at the table agreed John Day at MOP would be off the table for 1997, said Darm -- it was more a situation where NMFS said, there is no way this is going to happen in 1997, because the mitigation called for in the Biological Opinion is not going to be in place -- do you really want to spend your energy and time working on it. It was a workload management issue, more than anything, she explained.

What about Lower Granite to 710? asked Bob Heinith. NMFS does not support operating Lower Granite at 710 feet because of the lack of juvenile facilities at that elevation -- the orifices are out of the water, Brown replied. Also, you would not be able to rely on spill. This, too, is a workload management issue, said Darm. I saw Lower Granite to 710 as a non-starter in 1997, and suggested that it probably would be useless to spend our time arguing about it. If it would be helpful for NMFS to provide a memo for the record, in addition to the meeting notes, we can do that. I think that would be a good idea, said Doug Arndt.

After a few minutes of further discussion, it was agreed that all IT decisions, and the outcome of each item on the IT agenda, need to be documented as clearly as possible in the minutes; it was also agreed that a brief written summary of each agenda item be written on a flip chart during the IT meetings themselves, so that participants leave the meeting with a clear understanding of decisions and work assignments made.

Tim Hall of Montana further suggested that, when the agendas for upcoming IT meetings are sent out, any items that will require a decision at that meeting be clearly noted on the agenda. It would be very helpful to distinguish between updates, informational briefings, discussion items and action items, he said. Excellent idea -- we'll do that, said Darm. It would also be helpful if you could list the name of the presenter for each agenda item, said Jay Nelson of

Alaska -- that way, those of us who participate by phone will know who to call for information.

I would argue that Lower Granite to 710 is an issue that is yet unresolved, both within the TMT and the IT, said Ray. I haven't heard any consensus on this issue at all, he said -- what I heard was a unilateral decision by NMFS. The same thing is true of John Day at MOP. Aren't issues that cannot be resolved at either the TMT or the IT level supposed to be immediately elevated to the Executive Committee? That's not correct, Darm replied -- if someone wants them to be raised, then they can be. But issues are not automatically bumped up to the EC.

After some minutes of further discussion, it was agreed to place both of these issues on the agenda of the next Executive Committee meeting, scheduled for April 4.

Continuing on, Ray said that dissolved gas management is another issue that needs to be resolved quickly. This is going to be a high runoff year; the Corps still has broken-down generating units; the Corps has gas abatement equipment that is not currently installed; the Corps has plans, I understand, to work on bypass screens in-season, he said. We at Idaho Rivers have not yet seen a plan to shift overgeneration spill away from the eight dams in the migration corridor. And despite the letter sent on March 10 from Representatives Crapo and Furse to NMFS, we still don't have an in-season management plan, said Ray.

Another big issue that needs to be resolved right now, or elevated to an immediate Executive Committee meeting, is barging, Ray continued. Our plan calls for no barging in 1997. For eight of the past 10 years, the management agencies have been saying, we have a drought, river conditions are lethal, we have to get all of the fish we can into barges. This year, the management agencies are saying, we're going to have a huge water year, TDG levels will be off the scale, river conditions will be lethal, we have to get all the fish we can into barges, Ray said. If that's the case, when will fish ever be allowed to migrate in-river? If the river is too lethal to allow in-river migration all of the time, then let's say that right up front and get it out on the table.

Moving on to flow targets, Ray said that, given the magnitude of the water year predicted, it appears likely that the Bi-Op flow targets can be met on a daily basis during the spring migration period. But what about summer? he asked. Are we just going to blow it off, like we did last year? I certainly hope not -- I hope that NMFS will commit to meeting Bi-Op flow targets, on a daily basis, every day of the migration season, and will put a plan in place prior to the beginning of the migration season that spells out exactly how that's going to be accomplished, said Ray.

Thanks, Charles -- questions? asked Darm. Does the IRU plan support a moratorium on all spending for mainstem construction activities at the Lower Snake River dams, effective immediately? asked Keith Kutchins of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Absolutely, Ray replied.

Are you going to cover these issues today? asked Ray. Some of them are on today's agenda, yes, Darm replied. Our plan is to move through the agenda. I request that today's agenda be amended to include discussion and, if possible, resolution, of the Idaho strategy for spring transportation, of the gas management issue and of the gas abatement studies issue, said Ray. Unfortunately, we don't have an Idaho representative here, and they haven't yet submitted a request or a proposal to the IT, said Darm. And to answer your question, I can't promise you that we will address or resolve all of those issues today, she said.

Will you set a date for an Executive Committee meeting, then? asked Ray. Yes, Darm replied.

Where do the State of Idaho and Idaho Department of Fish & Game stand on the IRU proposal? asked Joe Dos Santos of the Salish/Kootenai Tribes. I'm not sure, Ray replied -- I think it would be fair to say that they agree on some elements, and disagree on others.

III. Corps of Engineers and Fish Passage Center Reports at IT Meetings During Spring and Summer.

This is just a quick update, to be sure that everyone has the same expectation in terms of how we will be conducting these meetings as we move into the in-season management period, said Brown. Last year, when we agreed to fold FOEC responsibilities into this committee, one of the conditions was that each IT meeting agenda would include a review of system operations and the status of the migration. It is our intent, beginning with the April IT meeting, to ask Doug Arndt and Michelle DeHart to fill the same roles they filled last year, and provide those updates. If anyone has suggestions about ways this in-season update process could be improved, please let us know, said Brown.

IV. 1997 Operations -- Issues Elevated from Technical Management Team.

The way we approached today's meeting, from the TMT's perspective, was that we were charged with providing draft Emergency Protocols, said TMT Chairwoman Cindy Henriksen. We have developed a list of issues arising from that document, as well as an issue or two arising from a recently-received System Operational Request, 97-2.

Brown requested that the Emergency Protocols issues be addressed under the following agenda item, and suggested that SOR 97-2 be discussed under this agenda item. SOR 97-2 was submitted by the Salmon Managers (ODFW, IDFG, WDFW, NMFS, CRITFC and USFWS) on March 3. In essence, this SOR covers system operations for March and April, asking specifically that reservoirs not be drafted below flood control rule curve elevations, because such an operation may result in low flows during the early spring migration. To avoid this situation, the SOR establishes the following minimum flow targets:

-- Priest Rapids Dam from April 1 through the spring migration period: 134 Kcfs

- Priest Rapids Dam instantaneous minimum flow to protect fall chinook redds: 70 Kcfs
- Lower Granite Dam beginning April 10: 100 Kcfs
- McNary Dam throughout the spring migration period: 260 Kcfs.

Henriksen spent a few minutes detailing the issues identified by the TMT in the course of discussing this SOR:

ISSUES ON SOR 97-2
4 March 1997

Montana had some overall objections to the SOR. These objections included the Salmon Managers' desire for daily/instantaneous flow objectives. Montana objects to a requirement for a flow objective other than seasonal. Montana also objects to a required flow objective at Priest Rapids. The basis for this objection is the fact that it might shift spill to Hungry Horse at some future date. Montana has written a companion document (Enclosure C) outlining their objections.

The TMT found three issues resultant from SOR 97-2, including,

ISSUE 1: End-of-March reservoir elevations at projects

ISSUE 2: A lack of commitment on the part of operating agencies to meet daily minimum flow targets

ISSUE 3: What is the basis for the 134 Kcfs requirement at Priest Rapids, and what is the biological effect if it is not met?

The basis for this request, just so everyone understands, is the fact that the Salmon Managers were concerned that, in the event that it turns cold early in April, we retain the option, and the necessary storage elevations, to augment flows during the early portion of the spring migration in the Mid-Columbia and Snake rivers, said Jim Ruff of the NPPC staff. If we follow the flood control rule curves strictly, the storage projects will essentially be empty by April 1, and we will have lost the flexibility to maintain acceptable flow levels for early-spring migrants, Ruff explained. The Salmon Managers are requesting that we view the flood control rule curves as flexibly as possible, to retain the maximum amount of storage possible given flood control needs.

The other facet of this request is the fact that the operating agencies intend to draft some projects, including Dworshak, to below their March 31 flood control rule-curve elevation, due to physical project constraints, said Brown. For example, at Grand Coulee, the Corps views a draft of one foot per day as the

maximum it can safely provide, due to bank stability and other concerns; the current flood control rule curve calls for a Grand Coulee draft of 41 feet between March 31 and April 30. In other words, if we start April at 1249 feet elevation at Grand Coulee, Reclamation does not believe it will be possible to safely reduce elevation at that project to 1208 feet, as called for in the Bi-Op, by April 30, said Ron McKown. We need to be lower than 1249 feet on March 31 if we're going to meet elevation 1208 feet by April 30 -- elevation 1230 is most likely, said one meeting participant. The difference in flows between elevation 1238 feet and elevation 1230 feet is 234 Ksf, or 7.8 Kcfs per day through the 30-day period, added Ruff.

After some minutes of further discussion, Brown said he would like a clear elucidation of the reasons for the rejection of this SOR. I wouldn't characterize it as a rejection of the SOR, said Henriksen -- there were four bullets contained in the SOR, and the Corps and Reclamation both wholeheartedly support the last two bullets (spring-period flow targets of 100 Kcfs at Lower Granite and 260 Kcfs at McNary), which reiterate our Records of Decision. Where we get into trouble is the concept of a guarantee to meet 100 Kcfs at Lower Granite and 134 Kcfs at Priest Rapids Dam on a day-average minimum, said Henriksen. However, we don't see any major stumbling blocks to complying with the request for a Priest Rapids instantaneous minimum flow of 70 Kcfs to protect fall chinook redds, she added.

At the last TMT meeting, the Corps and Reclamation agreed to do the best we can with the resources available to us to meet these requests, Henriksen continued. There is certainly no intent on our part to avoid meeting these goals. What would cause you not to meet these requests? asked Darm. A lack of cooperation from Mother Nature, Henriksen replied. And you can't go lower than elevation 1208 at Grand Coulee? asked Darm. No -- that's minimum pool, Henriksen replied. And if you don't draft that project to elevation 1230 by April 1, you may have to violate some other requirement -- dissolved gas limits, streamflow, etc. -- in order to meet your primary requirement, which is to be at elevation 1208 by April 30? asked Darm.. That's correct, Henriksen replied.

Reclamation has agreed to try to meet the 134 Kcfs flow request at Priest Rapids, she continued. However, Romeo Wisco has said that Reclamation would not place a higher priority on trying to achieve 134 Kcfs at Priest Rapids than it would on trying to meet the McNary flow objective later in the season -- in other words, if Snake River flows drop off in the spring, and flow augmentation from Grand Coulee becomes necessary to meet 134 Kcfs at Priest Rapids, faced with a choice of meeting the 134 Kcfs at Priest Rapids or meeting the flow target at McNary, Reclamation would place a higher priority on the latter objective.

It seems to me that we can do better than that, said Rob Lothrop of CRITFC. We have these problems regularly in the Mid-Columbia in April. If flows pick up in the Snake, we reduce outflow from Grand Coulee. As the Salmon Managers have stated in years past, that isn't good for flows in the Mid-Columbia during the critical April migration period, or from the standpoint of protecting fall chinook redds at Vernita Bar. Those are very real concerns for the states and tribes, and also for the utilities that operate projects in that section of the river, and that have the responsibility to mitigate for the effects of their project operations. I would prefer to see more constructive dialogue take place, to allow us to avoid what potentially could be a very

contentious situation, said Lothrop. I think we have an opportunity to avoid that situation, and although I'm hesitant to kick this issue back to TMT, I'm not comfortable with where it sits today. Perhaps there is more technical information that we could consider, to give us a better understanding of the potential risks and benefits involved.

Tom Cooney of WDFW agreed with Lothrop's comments. The intent of the SOR, he said, is to ask the Corps and the Bureau to look at what flexibility might be available to ensure that, if there is a cold snap in early April, they can continue to provide high levels of flow for Mid-Columbia migrants. Those fish are in trouble, and are being considered for listing as we speak. From that standpoint, we would appreciate another look at operations in March that affect flexibility in April.

We could ask the TMT to do a SSARR run to see what flows and reservoir elevations might be expected during that period if we set a goal of 134 Kcfs at Priest Rapids, to add weight to Romeo's statements about the effects of such an operation on our flexibility later in the spring period, suggested Doug Arndt of COE. Why don't we see if there is enough flexibility in the system to target flows very closely to the presence of fish in the system?

I think that would be a good start, said Lothrop. Let's do some SSARR runs, and assume some alternative precipitation/runoff patterns. They may already exist, and that would give us a better sense of what the risks are, given the draft limits imposed by the system. The primary stock of concern in the Mid-Columbia starts moving out as early as the last week in March, said Bob Heinith of CRITFC, and are certainly present in the mainstem by the first week in April.

The real issue here is, are we at elevation 1230 feet, or elevation 1238 feet, at Grand Coulee on March 31, said Phil Thor of Bonneville. That eight feet is the issue that needs to be resolved. It seems to me that the higher end-of-March elevation will give you the greatest flexibility to meet the flow targets in the SOR, observed Brown. The group discussed this concept for some minutes; ultimately, the IT asked that COE provide some more information, in the form of additional SSARR runs, to help the IT quantify the risks involved in targeting a March 31 Grand Coulee elevation of 1238 feet -- factoring in early runoff vs. late runoff, high, low and normal precipitation, and the chances of being able to reach 1208 feet by April 30 without violating the one-foot-per-day draft limit at the project. We would also like more information, in the form of a brief written summary, from Reclamation on the reasons for the one-foot-per-day draft limit at that project, and the risks involved in higher rates of drafting for a few days, said Brown. It would also be helpful to have more detailed information on the historic shape and timing of the Mid-Columbia smolt migration, said Arndt. Better biological information all the way around would help to increase the operating agencies' comfort level -- you're asking us to give up a great deal of certainty in our flood control operation, and we need a good grasp of what biological benefits can be expected in return. Washington can provide those kinds of migration curves, as well as travel time information, said Tom Cooney --we'll work with the Fish Passage

Center to see what other information could be added to the packet.

Does this get resolved at TMT, or does it need to come back here? asked Darm. What sort of resolution would you expect from TMT? asked Henriksen. Currently, the TMT's proposed Grand Coulee operation is to be at elevation 1230 feet by the end of March, replied Brown. If, after further review of the information we've requested today, that's still the decision, we should at least have a better definition of why that's the decision. It would be helpful if the TMT could provide the IT some information about the downstream flow levels that might be expected to result from their recommended operation, said Darm.

In response to a question, Thor said that, according to Bonneville's projections, flows at Priest Rapids will be in the 131 Kcfs range during the week ending April 6, 143 Kcfs for the week ending April 13, 147 Kcfs in the week ending April 20, 160 Kcfs in the week ending April 27 and 184 Kcfs in the week ending May 4.

The discussion turned to the question of timing; if we wait until the next TMT meeting on March 19 to discuss this further, are we precluding the option of hanging on to the additional eight feet in Coulee? asked Heinith. It will be close, said Phil Thor -- in fact, we're scheduled to be at elevation 1238 by this weekend, and head downward from there. Does that make this entire issue moot? asked Brown. Unless we ask the action agencies to hold Grand Coulee elevation at 1238 feet until we have a chance to make a decision, said Heinith. It was pointed out that Reclamation could hold Coulee at 1238 feet until March 23, and still meet the 1230-foot end-of-March elevation target without violating the one-foot-per-day draft limit. Is that a possibility? asked Brown. After a telephone conversation with others at BOR, McKown reported that it would be possible to hold Coulee at elevation 1238 feet for one week -- a decision will need to be made by March 14. A few minutes of further discussion yielded a decision to convene an IT conference call at 1 p.m. on Friday, March 14 to resolve this issue.

V. 1997 Water Management Plan Items.

1. Unfinished Items from 2/12/97 TMT Issues List.
 - a. Biological Data and Use of Forecasts for In-Season Management.

At the February 13 IT meeting, as you'll recall, we went through the list of Water Management Plan issues raised by the TMT, said Brown. We were able to resolve some items, and various work assignments were made in the course of that discussion as well. There were two items that were sort of left hanging at the end of that discussion, said Brown -- Item 3, the use of biological data and forecasts to guide in-season management, and Item 4, biological threshold questions other than those involving in-season use of survival modeling. Both of these are items raised by Montana, he added.

In essence, Item 3 asks what fish passage and survival forecast methods or model analysis, if any, will be used to guide in-season management decisions. Actually, I believe we resolved that at the February 13 IT

meeting, said Lothrop -- there was agreement that models will not be used to guide in-season management.

This is not to say that the TMT can't discuss model results, added Darm. We're just saying that the IT is not going enshrine a particular model as something we are going to use to provide a basis for in-season management decisions. If someone wants to bring model results to a meeting, and make the argument that those results support a particular course of action, they're welcome to do so. The other discussion we need to have is whether these kinds of models should be paid for out of the direct fish and wildlife program, added Lothrop.

b. Biological Threshold Questions.

This item asks what thresholds of change between alternative scenarios will be used to guide decisions. Should alternatives with no measurable change in fish travel time or survival be considered equivalent and decided on the basis of other factors? It asks that the ISAB be asked to define "significant changes," and recommends that, when there are no measurable differences in benefits, alternatives that cause the least impacts on other resources should be used.

After some minutes of discussion, the IT declined to endorse this proposal; we don't intend to estimate survival relative to operating alternatives, said Brown. On another level, he added, this is a meeting management issue -- at what point do you cut off the endless debate about how small these numbers are, rather than letting it continue, to the detriment of more productive discussion?

Montana would simply like to keep the door open to make the argument that, often, it is impossible to measure or detect the impact of an operation for anadromous fish, yet that impact is often very measurable for resident fish, said Tim Hall. You can make those kinds of arguments, but they won't get you anywhere, said Darm -- we're agreeing right up front that we can't measure those impacts.

So on page 2 of the agenda, which shows possible future agenda items, items dropped for consideration in '97 etc., said Brown, I'll insert the last two discussion items into the "Issues Resolved" category.

2. Issues Raised from Further TMT Discussion.

As requested by the IT, the TMT prepared a draft Emergency Protocols document, dated November 18, 1996. The Salmon Managers provided an extensive rewrite of this draft of the Emergency Protocols on March 3. Henriksen distributed Enclosure F, a compilation of the November 18 draft Emergency Protocols and the Salmon Managers' March 3 redraft, in legislative markup format. At the last TMT meeting on March 4, the following Emergency Protocols issues were identified, she said:

ISSUE 1: Definition of "Emergency."

The TMT needs further clarification on the definition of an emergency. A planned operation should not cause an emergency declaration; similarly a variation of an operation outside the Biological Opinion should not require the declaration of an emergency. One position stated at the March 4 TMT meeting is that any fish loss in excess of the 1995 Biological Opinion measures requires mitigation. The question then becomes: what was the fish loss measurement in 1995, and how does that loss translate to other water years?

IT Resolution: Initial discussion of this issue focused on the distinction between fish emergencies and power emergencies.

Arndt said that, in his understanding, the task given to IT by the Executive Committee was the development of rules covering the response to power emergencies. It would appear that the TMT has expanded this original assignment to include fish emergencies, Darm observed. That's one category of issue. In reading through this list, she said, it would appear that another category of issue is the idea that any departure from the Biological Opinion operation could be considered an emergency.

After some minutes of discussion, the IT agreed that a set of emergency protocols is needed for both fish and power system emergencies. Power system emergencies were further broken down into generation emergencies and transmission emergencies. Ultimately, Lothrop suggested that the Fish Passage Advisory Committee be asked to take a first cut at developing draft "fish emergency" protocols, covering "Natural Resource Emergencies," "Fish Facility Emergencies" and "Maintenance Emergencies" (defined specifically on pp. 3-4 of Enclosure F) at their March 13 meeting; the draft document will then be submitted to TMT for discussion and, hopefully, adoption. The TMT was asked to develop protocols for dealing with generation emergencies and transmission emergencies.

ISSUE 2: Overall Objective.

This issue is a follow-on to the first one: there is concern that the overall tone of the emergency protocols suggests that the system can be in emergency status continuously. This was certainly not the original intent of the request for development of these protocols.

IT Resolution: The IT agreed that it should not be the intent or the effect of these emergency protocols to define "emergency" so broadly that the system is in a constant state of emergency.

ISSUE 3: Mitigation.

The TMT has agreed that, once an emergency has been declared, a team will meet to ameliorate the situation as soon as possible. Once the action has taken place, the TMT will go to the IT with a description of the emergency and the action taken, and will quantify fish losses during the emergency. The Salmon Managers' first priority is to determine in-kind, in-place mitigation

measures. The Salmon Managers would like sole responsibility for determining mitigation measures. Resident fish managers would like to provide input on any mitigation measures to determine if the mitigation has an effect on resident fish. The full TMT would like to have the opportunity to discuss an array of possible options should mitigation be required by the IT.

IT Resolution: I'm not bothered by the new language developed by the Salmon Managers, said Arndt -- I think it is consistent with both the ESA and the actions we agreed to through consultations. After some minutes of further discussion, it was agreed that the two suggested wordings for the mitigation section (see p. 9 of Enclosure F) should be combined. Brown agreed to take a first cut at melding the two drafts, producing a new draft in time for the next IT meeting; the other IT members agreed with this course of action.

ISSUE 4: Who Can Declare an Emergency?

The draft Emergency Protocols, dated November 18, state that an action agency can declare an emergency at the executive level. Action agencies are those that have responsibility for the emergency, and can take immediate action in response to the situation. The Salmon Managers would like tribal managers to have the ability to declare an emergency in those situations in which the tribal managers have statutory authority over the resource at risk.

IT Resolution: Pursuant to the agreement that power system emergencies and fish and wildlife emergencies would be considered separately, it was agreed that the operating agencies, in the course of developing power system emergency protocols, will establish who can declare such emergencies, while the Fish Managers, in the course of developing fish and wildlife emergency protocols, will identify who can declare those types of emergencies.

ISSUE 5: What Is the Appropriate Order of Actions to be Taken in the Event of a Generation Emergency?

In the event of a generation emergency, the November 18 draft of the Emergency Protocols had an action plan. The Action Plan was separated into three groups of responses to an emergency. Group 1 was unchanged from the Nov. 18 draft to the Salmon Managers' redraft. In the November 18 draft, Group 2 actions included the following:

- Operate units outside 1%
- Operate projects outside MOP
- Reduce spill at one or more projects
- Adjust flows outside planned targets.

Group 3 actions (last actions taken) included the following:

- Restrict intertie capacity
- Shed other non-BPA non-firm contracts
- Reduce firm loads
- Violate flood control or other first-priority non-power requirements
- Buy energy/capacity at any price

In the Salmon Managers' redraft, Groups 2 and 3 were reversed in priority, with actions detrimental to fish to be taken last.

IT Resolution: The IT directed that the actions listed in Groups 1, 2 and 3 be combined into a single list, without prioritization

-- let's just list the range of possible responses, suggested Darm, and focus on available tools, rather than what order they

should be used in. The appropriate response will be decided on a case-by-case basis, because every emergency is different, she said. Does anyone have a problem with that? No IT objections were raised to this direction.

What's the next step? asked Phil Thor. What does the IT want to see back from the TMT, and when do they want to see it? I want to be able to give the Executive Committee a set of Emergency Protocols for System Operations before the 1997 migration season begins, Darm replied. She reiterated that the TMT has been asked to develop the generation emergency and transmission emergency portions of the Emergency Protocols at its next meeting on March 19; FPAC will take a first cut at the fish emergency protocols at its March 13 meeting, and will provide a draft document for discussion at the March 19 TMT meeting. The TMT will then present the new draft of the Emergency Protocols at the March 24 IT meeting.

VI. Summer Spill Study -- Progress Report (CRITFC).

Discussion of this agenda item was deferred to the IT's March 24 meeting.

VII. Reestablishment of the Watershed Equity Team (WET).

Discussion of this agenda item was deferred to the IT's March 24 meeting.

VIII. PATH Scenarios Developed at Feb. 25 IT/PATH Meeting.

Discussion of this agenda item was deferred to the IT's March 24 meeting.

IX. Overview of Revised Outline of Hydro Chapter of NMFS Snake River Recovery Plan.

Discussion of this agenda item was deferred to the IT's March 24 meeting.

X. Other.

Since last fall, I've tried to keep the IT informed about where the Corps is in the fish passage improvements efficiency

study ordered by Congress, said Arndt. The idea is to do things more efficiently, cheaper, faster, better. In November, I

indicated that we were looking at SAIC as the primary contractor for this effort; in January, we signed a contract with SAIC, and they are hitting the ground running, Arndt said. A key component of their process to develop efficiency improvement

recommendations is to undertake a series of one-on-one interviews with entities throughout the region,. I have provided them with some initial points of contact, he said, mainly IT members.

Arndt introduced Doug Pearman of SAIC and Dave desVoigne of HDR Engineering, two of the principals involved in the study's development. These gentlemen will be contacting you within

the next week or two, Arndt said; they have worked up a series of questions and are very interested to get your responses.

Darm distributed Enclosure G, a paper outlining NMFS's response to questions, raised at the last IT meeting, regarding implementation of the Bi-Op and operation of the FCRPS. The questions include clarification of seasonal flow objectives and interim reservoir draft limits, the potential use of the additional draft of Dworshak for grouting operations to partially relieve the draft obligations of another reservoir in the system, and the overall biological benefits of the opinion with respect to listed Snake River fish. We don't need to discuss this document today, said Darm; this is simply F.Y.I.

XI. Next Executive Committee Meeting and Agenda Items.

Over the objections of Ray and Lothrop, who wished to schedule the meeting in March, the IT recommended that the next Executive Committee meeting be scheduled for Friday, April 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at CRITFC's downtown Portland offices. The IT spent the last hour of the meeting discussing possible EC agenda items and issues for resolution, ultimately developing the attached list.

The list of items under "1997 Water Management Plan and Fish Passage Plan -- next steps" are merely brief issue papers to be prepared for Executive Committee information, Darm explained -- we wanted to let the EC know that these issues, while not yet ripe for discussion, are on our screen.

The discussion turned to what items, ideally, should be provided to the EC membership in advance of upcoming meetings. This list is very helpful, obviously, said Mike Field of Idaho. I would also hope you can give us a well-crafted summary of each action item, which clearly lays out what the issue is that we are to address, states the arguments on both sides, and the positives and negatives of both the science and the economics surrounding each decision item. It would also be helpful to have a sense of how each item fits into the overall plan -- will this project still be useful under a Lower Snake drawdown scenario? Under a dam removal scenario? That's the sort of thing I'd like to see, he said.

XII. Next Implementation Team Meeting, Work Assignments and Possible Agenda Items.

The next IT meeting was set for Monday, March 24 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NMFS's Portland offices. With that, the meeting was adjourned. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.